THE EXCELLENCY OF Human Understanding,

An ARGUMENT,

That the *regular* Use of *Reason* is not contrary to the Veneration due to *Holy Scripture*, but absolutely necessary to produce true *Faith*.

In Answer to the pretended *Censure* of the *Remarks* upon Mr. *Young*'s two Discourses.

PSAL. 49. 3.

My Mouth shall speak of Wisdom, and the Meditation of my Heart shall be of Understanding.

LONDON,
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To the True *Israelite.*

THE Saviour *of the World having assured us,* That Wisdom shall be justified of her Children: *I do humbly present You with the following* Discussion, *knowing You will not so much regard the Meanness of the Donor, as approve of the endeavours to draw Men from* Darkness *to* Light, *from Prejudice and Inconsideration to the regular Use of their Understanding.*

Surely, proud Babylon *shall fall, and Men shall finally be awakened from the Inchantment of her Sorceries! The Evidence of* Reason, *the Truth of* Holy Scripture, *and the Excellency of its* Terms of Union, *will oppose themselves to all Mens inconsiderate* Devices, *and will prevail.*

Out of the very Mouth of Babes and Sucklings, God will ordain Strength. *In his own good time, God will judg his Enemies, and save his People. All Praise shall be ascribed to God. For ever blessed be his Great Name!*

I pray You to accept of this Earnest of my Respects, and to be perswaded that I am, and ever desire to be,

London, *Decemb.* 1701.

Your most Humble, and most Obedient Servant.

The

The Excellency of Human Understanding, &c.

IT doth not much concern the World to know, whether the *Remarker*, or Mr. *Young* and the pretended *Censurer*, have been guilty of *Oversights*: But it is of the greatest *importance*, that Men be well *grounded* in the *Principles of the Reformation*; and that those who *confound* them, and go about to *overthrow* them, be *warned* of their *Error*.

Indeed, altho the *Fitness* and *Necessity* of the *regular Use of Reason*, in order to discern all Sacred Truths, be the grand and fundamental *Principle of Protestants*, insomuch that if it holds not good, they cannot warrant their dissent from the *Church of Rome*; too many *Protestants*, nevertheless, especially among the *Calvinists*, have been apt to fall back to the old *Prejudices* of the *Roman Catholicks* against *Reason*, not duly considering the *Rule* which themselves walk by.

If then to *speak evil* sometimes of *Reason*, be a piece of *Inconsideration*, it is not peculiar to Mr. *Y.* only, and to his *Advocate*; but is too common with many Learned Men amongst the *Reform'd*. Howbeit, how venerable soever these Men be for their other good Qualities; it is not reasonable, when we see them heedlessly *undermining* the *Reformation*, which has cost, and has been cemented with the Blood of so many *Martyrs*, we should very contentedly look on, and not desire them to *forbear*, or so much as *represent* to them what it is they are doing.

'Tis not therefore out of a vain humour of Scribling, that I take the *Remarker*'s Part; but because I am perswaded, it is of great *concernment* to the *Design*, as well as to the *Honour* of *Christianity*, to evince that its Professors should not *vilify* and *disannul* the just *Use* of *Reason*. To clear this Matter,

First, I shall observe what it is, that the *Remarker reprehends* in Mr. *Y*--'s *System*.

Secondly, I shall mark, that the *Censurer* is guilty of the same *Fault*, which is imputed to the Discourses which he defends; and I shall consider his *Arguments*, and shew them to be very *unreasonable*.

In the first place, we must *observe what it is that the Remarker reprehends in Mr. Y--'s System.*

For want of considering wherein lieth the Stress of a Controversy, Men often wrangle in the dark, and fall into Disputes of Words, and into needless Digressions.

Now, what is *objected* to Mr. *Y.* is not that *he never gives Reason its due.* The *Remarker* himself, in the *6th* Page of the *Remarks*, takes notice, that in two places, *P.* 49. and *P.* 64. Mr. *Y.* acknowledgeth the *Offices* and *Privileges* belonging to *Reason.*

Mr. *Y*--'s *Advocate* therefore need not be at the trouble to make good his *Undertaking*, (P. 10.) *That Mr. Y. has given Reason its intire due.* No body saith that he has not done so. Contrariwise, the Places are expresly referred to where he has done it.

What is the *Quarrel* then, will you say? What is it that is so much found *fault* with?

I answer; It is very obvious: The *Remarker* pretends, not only that Mr. *Y.* allows the *Use* of *Reason*, but as it were, *by-the-by*, in one poor Period or two, which by unwary, that is to say, by most Readers, may be easily overlooked; but, principally, that he allows it but *verbally*, or in the *Theory* only, and that by the current of his System, the two Sentences, that gave *Reason* its *due*, are effectually *recall'd*, or *made void* and *of none effect*.

If it be ſo, it is much ſuch another *Quarrel* as our *Saviour* had with the *Scribes and Phariſees*, for *rejecting, by their Traditions, the Commandments of God*; the Neceſſity of which, nevertheleſs, they taught every time they read the *Law*. Wherefore our *Saviour* bad his Diſciples to do as they ſaid, *ſitting in* Moſes *Chair*; but withal he cautioned them againſt the *Leven* of the *Phariſaical Hypocriſy*, and warned all good Men to beware of the *Shifts* and *Evaſions*, whereby thoſe Authors of an *inconſiſtent* Syſtem *diſannulled* in the *Concluſion* what they had laid down in the *Premiſes*.

Theſe *hypocritical Jews* are the *Children* in the *Parable*, who having receiv'd a *Command* from their *Father*, anſwer, *We will do it, Sir*; but, *do it not*.

They *preached* up the *Law* high enough upon occaſion; and, on its account, did not a little value themſelves above the reſt of the World. But when it came to the *practice*, ſome of them went to that degree of extravagancy as to affirm, that it was ſufficient to keep any one ſingle Commandment. Thus, *pulling down* what they had *built* before, they *tranſgreſſed* and *deſtroyed* the *Law*.

The ſame *Crime* is juſtly imputed to the *Roman Catholicks*. As the *Jewiſh Phariſees* made *void* the Precepts of the *Law*, ſo the *Papiſts* render of *no effect* the Commands of the *Goſpel*.

What! Do *Papiſts* profeſs or declare that it is *not neceſſary to keep God's Commandments?* O, no; For what ſounds more high in their Mouths than *Good Works* and *Merits?* Yet after all they are but *words*. *Good Works* may ſeek ſomewhere elſe for all this, if they will be practiſed. *Confeſſion and Penance*, and *Confeſſion and Penance* to the end of the Chapter, will *excuſe* a Man even from ever *loving God*.

And our Friends the *Antinomians*, how will they clear themſelves from the like *Prevarication?* A little of Confeſſion indeed, and of Abſolution, goes a great way with them. Thoſe are not the *Shifts* by which they will *make void* the *Goſpel*. But, they ſay, *Men have not always ſufficient Grace*; *All may be well with a Death-bed Penitence*, &c. which certainly are as good *Evaſions* as any.

After the ſame manner the *Papiſts* render alſo the *Word of God* of *no uſe*. They do not ſay it is the *Word of the Devil*, nor even that it is *impoſſible* to *know* it to be the *Word of God*. *Sometimes* they'l tell you, * *That there is nothing more manifeſt, or more certain, than the Writings of the Old and New Teſtament*; ——*That, to the praiſe of the Bereans, it is recorded, they ſearched daily the Scriptures, to ſatisfy themſelves, whether that which St.* Paul *had preached to them, was agreeable thereto*: —— *That thoſe then oppoſe* Moſes, *the Prophets, the Apoſtles, Chriſt himſelf, and God the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, who lightly eſteem, or ſpeak contemptuouſly of the Divine Oracles*.

But *moſt ordinarily* they talk at another rate, and call Scripture, † *Ink variouſly figured in a Book, unſenſed Characters, waxen natur'd Words, not yet ſenſed, nor having any certain Interpreter, but fit to be play'd upon diverſly by quirks of Wit*; *that is, apt to blunder and confound, but to clear little or nothing*.

They

* Sacris Scripturis, quæ Propheticis & Apoſtolicis Literis continentur, nihil eſt notiùs, nihil certiùs:——De Beræenſibus illud non ſine Laude commemoratur, quòd, cùm Paulum Apoſtolum audiviſſent, ſcrutabantur quotidie Scripturas, ſi hæc ita ſe haberent, &c.——Cum Moſe igitur pugnant, cum Prophetis, cum Apoſtolis, cum Chriſto ipſo, ac Deo Patre, & Spiritu Sancto, qui Sacras Literas, & Oracula Divina contemnunt. *Bellarm. De Verbo Dei, Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 2.

† Chartacea Scripta, & membranæ, quibus Myſteria ſua noluit Chriſtus committere, nec voluit Eccleſiam ſuam ab iis pendere: ——Litera mortua ſcripta atramento, quam ſi quis truncare velit & torquere, vel pravis expoſitionibus corrumpere, non ſentiat;——Regula Lesbia, ſive plumbea;

They affirm, *That it cannot be known which is the true Scripture, and its true ſenſe, but from the true Church:* And, *That if the Holy Scripture was read in the vulgar Tongue, the People not only ſhould not be bettered thereby, but made worſe, and ſhould be ſcandalized, inſtead of being edified; for that the Reading of Scripture would put into Mens heads all kind of Errors, as well concerning Morality, as the Doctrines of Faith.*

——— Gladius anceps;——— Naſus cereus;———Quæ ſit vera Scriptura, & quis ejus verus ſenſus, non poſſumus ſcire, niſi ex teſtimonio veræ Eccleſiæ.——— Si Scripturæ lingua vulgari legerentur, Populus non ſolum non caperet fructum ex Scripturis, ſed etiam caperet detrimentum; acciperet enim facillimè occaſionem errandi, tum in Doctrina Fidei, tum in præceptis vitæ ac morum, &c. *Coſter. Enchirid. cap.* 1. *Pighi. Eccleſ. Hierarch. Lib.* 2. *cap.* 2. *Bellarm. de Verbo Dei. Lib.* 2. *cap.* 15.

By theſe Examples we ſee that Men may contradict themſelves: And they are ſuch meaſures as theſe, that are found *fault* with in Mr. *Y*--'s Syſtem. The *Remarker* complains that Mr. *Y.* ſpends his Eloquence, to *take* that *away* from *Reaſon*, which ſometimes, *by-the-by*, he *grants* to be its *Office* and its *Right*.

Secondly, *The Cenſurer is guilty of the ſame Fault which is imputed to Mr.* Y--*'s Diſcourſes.*

Whether or no Mr. *Y.* after the Example of many others, has been thus guilty of *contradicting* himſelf, I do not inquire: Whoſoever liſteth, may *compare* his *Diſcourſes* with the *Remarks*.

'Tis not indiſpenſibly neceſſary to know what ſuch or ſuch Men hold or aſſert; it is ſufficient to compare Reaſon with Reaſon, Cauſe with Cauſe.

It imports only to be ſatisfied, which of theſe two Syſtems is to be followed; whether we ought to *prefer* that, which indeed *grants*, that *Reaſon* is to be made *uſe* of, to *judg which is a true Revelation*, and *what is the ſenſe* of that which is *revealed*; but, at the ſame time, *clips* the *Wings* of *Reaſon*, and pretends, that it *cannot ſoar* ſo high, and that it is unfit for the purpoſe: Or, whether we ought to take that to be the moſt *rational* Syſtem which is *conſiſtent* with it ſelf, and aſſerts, not only that *Reaſon* is to be *conſulted* in ſome *little* meaſure, but that it ought *thorowly* to be *attended* unto; and that not only it *will not then deceive us*, but that there is *no other way* to arrive certainly to the *diſcovery of Truth*.

Whether or no the firſt of theſe Syſtems be that of Mr. *Y.* it is certainly adopted, (as we ſhall find) and maintained by Mr. *Y*--'s *Advocate*. Now, becauſe many Men are apt to fall into the ſame *Faults*, of which this Gentleman and his Syſtem are *guilty*, I ſhall *therefore conſider* them.

The *Cenſurer* in ſaying that Mr. *Y. has given Reaſon its due*, undoubtedly approves of thoſe *Prerogatives*, which Mr. *Y.* aſcribes to *Reaſon*: And indeed, as more need not, ſo leſs cannot be *granted* to *Reaſon* by *Proteſtants*.

The buſineſs then will be to ſhew, that the *Cenſurer* actually *recals* theſe *Grants*, and ſo *contradicts* himſelf, and makes *Reaſon* to be of *no uſe:* But then we ſhall ſee, at the ſame time, that his *Arguments*, in ſo doing, are *weak* and full of *Sophiſtry*.

We ſhall find he renders *Reaſon ineffectual* two different ways. 1*ſt*. When he directly *declaims* againſt *Human Wiſdom:* And even, 2*ly*. when he *intimates* what is to be the *Uſe of Reaſon*.

As to the 1*ſt*. In his 2*d* Page he begins his *Declamation* againſt *Reaſon*, and even in general repreſents it as *unfit* to be *truſted* in the *diſcuſſion* of Matters of *Religion:* For what he ſays there, and indeed almoſt throughout his Book, imports; * *That over all the Land of the Living, there is not ſuch a thing to be found as a Human Wiſdom, that is, a true Wiſdom, ſecure from deception and erring, and qualified to be a ſure and ſafe Guide in Matters of Religion.*

* *Cenſur.* P. 2.

That

That is to say, *a sure and safe Guide*, in the sense that the *Remarker* pretends, that Human Understanding, or *Reason*, is such a *Guide*. For it is the *Remarker's Notion*, touching *Reason* being a *sure and safe Guide*, that is *impugned*, and *rejected*.

It is therefore necessary to consider, *in what sense* the *Remarker* takes *Reason* to be a *Guide*, and a *sure Guide*. First *negatively*; the *Remarker* doth not take *Reason* to be such a *Guide*, in an *absolute* sense, independently of all other Rules, as if it was able to * *spin out all Truths merely out of it self, without any other helps*: Then *positively*; he only affirms, that our *Understanding* is to *Guide* us, in the *judging* and *applying* of the *Rules* and *Helps*, and of the *intent* and *meaning* of the said Helps and Rules, which the *Providence* of God * *presents* us with, to *enable* us to discern *all necessary Truth*.

* *Remarks*, p. 3.

Col. 2.

* *Ibid.* I say, * *all necessary Truth*; for those are the *Remarker's* words, in the place quoted in the margent: or *all Truths that God shall judg necessary, for the Salvation of them that follow these Measures.*

But the *Remarker* hesitates not to assert, that *Reason* will not fail to *Guide* us *surely*, in that, in which it has been said it is to *Guide* us; provided it be consistent with it self, and * *proceed upon those Rules*, which every Man's *Understanding* may discern to be *necessary*, and may use and follow, if a Man have but *common sense*, and *will consider*; that is, if he be *serious* and *sincere*.

* *Remarks*, p. 3.

Col. 1.

Using these *Means*, and proceeding upon this *Method*, as in a sufficient measure, *every Man may* do; *Reason* according to this System, will infallibly *lead* us to all *necessary Truths*.

This is the only *sense* in which the *Remarker* takes *Human Wisdom* to be a *true Wisdom*, secure from deception and erring, and qualified to be a sure and safe *Guide* in Matters of *Religion*. Wherefore when the *Censurer* condemns the *Remarker's* Notion of *Reason's* being *a sure and safe Guide*; he denies *Reason*, thus considered, (*using such Helps*, and *proceeding upon such Rules* as have been intimated, and as *Reason* knows, or if it considers, *may know* to be necessary,) to be a *sure Guide*: He judgeth, that this is a mere *ens rationis*, a perfect Chimera; that there is *no such Wisdom* to be *found* among *Men*; and that to represent *Human Reason*, as every Man's *Understanding*, as *capable* of all this, is * *Censure*, * *to adapt Things to Notions, and not Notions to Things*.

* p. 2.

He is pleasant upon the *Remarker*, for thinking to find that *at home*, which is not to be met with in any part of the *World*: For proof of which Assertion of his, in the first place, he cites that sentence of Holy *Job*, (*Job* 28. 13.) *Man knoweth not the price thereof*, (of Wisdom) *neither is it found in the Land of the Living*.

But now with your leave, Mr. *Censurer!* If this expression is to be taken literally, and if there is indeed *no* such thing as *true Reason*, or Wisdom; why then we are all a pack of Fools: And if so, how shall we do, to *reason consistently?* For *Fools* cannot be sure to do that; and yet if we can reason but *inconsistently*, we had as good not reason *at all*. *Reasoning inconsistently*, properly is not *reasoning*, but *playing the Fool*.

And if we are not *capable of Reason*, God is too Wise and Merciful to *expect* it from us; on your supposition therefore, we cannot think, that there must be any *use*, or necessity of Reason in matters of Religion. *Ad impossibile nemo tenetur.*

Yet if I mistake not, you do sometime intimate, that we stand in need of *Reason* in one Occurence, or two. Which if you do, you forget your self; and you are the setter-forth of an *inconsistent System*. For here you think to prove, (by an Authority, which all sincere and considering Men must submit to) that there is *no* such thing as *true Reason* and Consideration, or that our *Understanding cannot reason truly and regularly*.

But

But I pray you; If it is not to be expectned, that *true Wisdom*, and *we* should meet together; which way will you take to *understand* the saying of *Job*, which you have quoted? Can a *Horse*, or a *Mule*, that have *no understanding*, *conceive* the *sense* thereof?

Truly we are not better than *Mules* and *Horses*, if we are *void of Reason*. And we are certainly *void of Reason*, if *there is not to be found a Human Wisdom that is a true Wisdom*. For *Reason* that is *not truly wise*, is not *Reason*: It is *Folly*.

Not one grain of what may be called *Reason*, can be allowed to your System, seeing you say there is *no* such thing as *true Reason*; and it is evident, that *Reason* which cannot be *truly reasonable*, is *no Reason at all*.

Since then *Reason*, that is *true Reason*, is not a thing you aim at, or pretend to; you cannot tell *truly*, what it is that *Job* means.

As for the *Remarker*, 'twould be *easy* for him, according to his *Principles*, to *observe* that *Reason* willeth we should *consider* what *goeth before*, and what *followeth*.

And *so* doing *we shall find*, that in the last Verse of the same Chapter, *Job* sheweth, *That to depart from Evil is Understanding*, and that Religion, or *the Fear of God*, *is the Wisdom* which God has allotted to *Man*.

Then when he saith, *That Man knoweth not the price thereof*, &c. If we understand it of *Religion*, it is plain that that sentence must be understood with some allowance, and that it is *hyperbolical*. For *Job* himself was very *religious*; and no doubt there were many others, that were so besides him.

Even the *Papists* do acknowledg, that there is such a thing as *Natural Religion*; or that by the *Light of Nature*, that is to say, by *Reason* and Consideration, Men may discern that there is a God and a Providence; that *God is to be fear'd and honoured*; that in order to be acceptable to God, and to be for ever happy, we must study to the best of our power to *live righteously* with respect to other Men, *and temperately* in reference to our selves; in which *three* particulars, (*Piety*, *Justice*, and *Temperance*) consists the *whole Duty of Man*.

The evidence of these Truths, and the reasonableness of these Duties is obvious, especially to all serious and sincere Inquirers: And even in some measure, Natural Conscience, at one time or other, suggests these things to all Men, whether they will or no. *Job* therefore must not be so interpreted, as to be made to *contradict* any thing of all this; as he would do, if he asserted, that the speculative part, or knowledg of *Religion*, was above the *capacity* of Men.

Rabbi *Solomon* interprets *in the Land of the Living*, *in terra suaviter viventium*; it being usual for *Epicures*, by *living*, to understand *Living deliciously*: *Vivamus mea Lesbia*, &c. And thus he takes *Job*'s sense to be this; *Sapientia in iis locum non habet, qui suaviter vivunt, sed in iis qui sese mortificant, ut eam consequantur*: Wisdom is not found among those that are Lovers of Pleasure, but among them that restrain their Appetites.

Howbeit, *Job* might certainly be understood to say, that whereas many Men are sagacious and industrious enough in searching out the knowledg of natural things, and arrive to an extraordinary skill therein; *they put forth their hands upon the Rock, they overturn the Mountains by the Roots, they cut out Rivers among the Rocks, and their eyes see every precious thing that lies there; they bind the Floods from overflowing, and the thing that is hid they bring forth to light*; yet that which is the best *Wisdom*, and deserves eminently the Name of *Wisdom*, is *little regarded* by Men: Men generally will not *consider* the *Excellency* of it, they shamefully neglect it; *the Depth says, it is not in me*; that is, *they that go down to the Sea in Ships*, and have so much time and opportunity to meditate of the things of *Religion*, are generally most *Brutish* and *Irreligious*, &c.

But tho that expression need not be taken rigorously, *literally* to import that *all Men*, without exception, were so far *unwise*

wise as utterly to neglect the concerns, and the consideration of Religion; yet if it were taken in that sense, that would not at all help Mr. *T--'s Advocate*: For it is certain, that *because Men do not a thing*, is no Argument, that they *cannot* do it. Men may act very *unwisely*, when yet they have *Reason* and *Understanding* enough to act better, if they *would*. Tho *no Man* absolutely had regarded *Religion*; nevertheless, as we have observed, there ever was such a thing as the *Light of Nature*.

Some by the *Wisdom*, which they think *Job* says, *that Men were strangers to*, understand *the Divine Wisdom by which God created the World*: And others, *the knowledg of the ways of God*, and the *Reasons* why he permits *good Men* to be *afflicted*, and *bad Men* to *prosper*. For *Bildad* having intimated, in the 25*th* Chapter, that no Man walks uprightly before God, and thereby imputed *Job*'s Misery to some heinous Sin, which he judged was thus punished by God; *Job* confutes that Error in the following Chapters.

'As God liveth, who by afflicting me 'has given Men a seeming occasion to take 'me for an unrighteous Person: all the 'while my breath is in me, I will not speak 'against my own Conscience. God forbid, 'that I should approve of what you have 'so erroneously said. Till I die, I will 'not remove my Integrity from me. My 'Righteousness I hold fast, and will not 'let it go: My Heart shall not reproach me, 'so long as I live. I know that God will 'be favourable to the Good in the end, 'and will punish the Wicked. But tho 'Men be very wise in many respects, there 'are abundance of things which they do 'not know. That which should suffice 'them, and which God has sufficiently 'made known, even by the Light of Na-'ture, is, that they should fear God, 'and depart from evil, and therefore not 'judg so uncharitably of their Neigh-'bours.

This last Exposition is probably the best: But in either of the other senses, *Job* says nothing against the *Excellency* of *Human Understanding*, or of the *Faculty of Reason* it self. And indeed if he had asserted, that *Reason* is not to be *trusted*, and is no *sure* and *safe Guide*, &c. his Writing could not have been esteemed a Divine Book; for *one* Divine *Light* cannot *contradict*, and destroy the *other*: but that Assertion would *destroy* the use of *Reason*, declaring it to be *unfit* for any *wise* purpose, and even to *understand* the true *sense* of *Revelation*. Therefore that Text of Holy *Job*, must needs rather be taken in any other *Signification*, than in that which is most *unreasonably* imputed to it, by the *Censurer*.

If it was capable of no other but this absurd sense, *That the Faculty of Reason is so imperfect, that by its means, Men are not able to know what is truly reasonable; and tho they should attend to it never so carefully, if they mean then to be ruled by it, they must not expect to be safe, there being no such thing as a Human Wisdom, that is, a true Wisdom.* All that the *Censurer* could gather from thence, would be, that either we should disallow that Authority, or turn *Scepticks*, and doubt of every thing.

But seeing this Book is received in the *Jewish* Church, (where there have been many *Prophets*, who no doubt would have warned the People of God against it, if it had not been Canonical) and since it is quoted and approved of in the *Gospel*; there is a great deal of Reason we should consider, whether a Sentence thereof, which by an unskilful Expositor is represented as seemingly absurd, is not capable of some other sense, that does not contradict a former Light, which we have receiv'd from God.

Now we find that the words considered with the Context, and the Scope of the Author, are susceptible of a very *rational* Explication: It is then *reasonable* we should prefer it, before that of the *Censurer*'s.

Nay, before we find out this *rational* Explication, we may be sure that of the *Censurer*'s is *false*: And if we could discern no other but his, yet we should not take his Interpretation to be the real meaning of the words, because that is an *absurd* sense,

ſenſe, and implies a Propoſition which is *contrary* to the Revelation of God in our *Souls*? and a Propoſition which is received would transform us into *Brutes*, and render us *unable* to be *ſure* of any thing, or to *know* any thing.

All we could then do, if we did not perceive the true meaning of *Job*, would be to own, we did not underſtand the Paſſage, and conclude that it were very *obſcure*. And we ſhould be forced to be contented with our Ignorance, till, uſing ſincerely the beſt means of information, according to our power, we ſhould find a *rational* ſenſe that might credibly appear to be the meaning of the Words.

Now, having fully ſhewn that this Text is not at all favourable to the *Cenſurer's* Syſtem, let us go on with his Declamation. * *Reaſon*, ſays he, *is not ſecure from deception and erring, and qualified to be a ſure and ſafe guide in Matters of Religion. Not to conceive a fond Idea of Human Wiſdom, but to give a juſt account of it, as it may be met with in Reality and Fact; we ſhould repreſent it not only as Limited and Deceivable, (for thus it was in the State of its Primitive Excellency) but likewiſe as prone to Error, from the Influence of Conceit, Partiality, Intereſt, &c.*

* *Cenſure.* p. 2, 3.

[*We ſhould repreſent it as Limited.*] I anſwer, It is certain, our Knowledg at preſent is very *Limited*; but how far it is *capable* of being *extended*, Mr. *Cenſurer* doth not know. And it is as *capable* of that improvement ſince the Fall, as before it. For our Souls are *ſpiritual* and *immortal* now, as well as before. Howbeit, how *Limited* ſoever be our *Underſtanding*, it is *large* enough to *diſcern* all, which it *concerns* us it ſhould diſcern.

Why then ſhould you *vilify Reaſon*, upon the account of its being *Limited*? *Reaſon* will vindicate it ſelf: For we all *know*, or *may know* what is *neceſſary*; and that's *ſufficient* for us.

What is here then to be obſerved, is, that our Knowledg its being *Limited*, doth not argue, we ought to be *afraid* to make *uſe* of our *Reaſon*; for in all things, in which we want to be ſatisfied, our *Reaſon* will faithfully ſerve us, if we make that *uſe* of it we *may*.

Would the *Cenſurer* aſſert the contrary? Would he make Brutes of us? Then he firſt makes a Brute of himſelf. And 'twould be worth the while, to hear him preſſing that Principle to ſome Adverſary, or ſome Adverſary urging him to ſtand by that Rule.

The more our Knowledg is *Limited*, the more we ought to endeavour to *enlarge* it. And far from *ſcaring* Men from ſo doing, we ſhould *encourage*, and *exhort* them to do what lieth in their *power*.

By the *Cenſurer's* Looks, 'tis eaſy to perceive what *Harangue*, on that occaſion, he'd make. *Beware*, would he ſay, *beware of truſting your Reaſon*; *It knows nothing, nor any thing can it know: How can it chuſe then, but miſguide ye?*

But no doubt the *Remarker* would thus argue: *Children your Knowledg is but ſmall? but if you pleaſe, you may know enough. You have that within you, which is of a Divine Original; A Spirit breathed by the Almighty, and a Beam of the Divine Nature, illuminating your Soul. Now you are at years of Diſcretion; and you have the Freedom and uſe of a Noble Faculty: You may conceive what is told you, you may conſider things of your ſelves, you may reflect upon the whole, and you have all the Attributes of God for your Warrant, that if you do your part, that is, what you can to paſs a true Judgment, you'll not fail to determine your ſelves right, in all things abſolutely neceſſary to your Well-being here, and to your eternal Welfare hereafter. Be not then afraid to make uſe of your Reaſon. On the contrary, ſtick ever to it, and never depart therefrom. It is that, my dear Friends, which diſtinguiſhes you from Brute Beaſts; If you go aſide from it, you'll be in danger of being loſt; but if you take it always along with you, as you may do; you'll be ſafe. Reaſon then in God's Name, and reaſon according to Reaſon.*

But * it is objected, *Reaſon is not only Deceivable, (for thus* * *Cenſure.* p. 2.

it was even before the Fall) *but, moreover, it is now extremely prone to Error.*

To the *Harangue*, again: To clear this Matter, let our *Pleaders* aſcend up the *Roſtra*. Firſt, the *Cenſurer*.

'Sirs, You may make the greateſt Abuſe 'imaginable of Reaſon. What mean ye 'then to do? Dare ye have any thing to do 'with that two-edged Tool? Beſides, it is 'ſharp at both ends; if you lean on it, it will 'faſten you to the Earth. Our firſt Father, 'alas, found it but too true: He would 'reaſon, with a vengeance! And Reaſon 'undid him. That was then the effect of 'it: But now we muſt expect much more 'ſtill from Reaſon, if we'll hearken to ſo 'wicked a Counſellor. It is 'now naughty in the higheſt 'degree. * It is influenced by 'Conceit, Partiality, Intereſt, 'Complexion, Education, and ſeveral other 'Prejudices. By a number of Inſtances it 'appears that Men, who had as large a ſtock 'of natural Reaſon as any others can pretend 'to, have miſcarried and ſwerved from 'Truth!

* *Cenſure.* P. 3.

Alack for them! the more's the pity if they could not help it. But now *Remarker*.

'Sirs, take heed you be not deceived. 'You may look to your ſelves certainly, elſe 'you are indeed in a deſperate hard caſe. 'The truth is, that if you will not be ſincere, and uſe your Endeavours, you will 'deſerve all the Misfortune that may happen to you; and Misfortune you muſt expect, if you will not conſider and be wiſe: 'For God has made no proviſion, nor ever 'will make any for unſincere Perſons, for 'Perſons that will not conſider or take heed, 'that will be negligent and careleſs; and, 'in ſhort, that will not ſeriouſly hearken to 'Reaſon. God will not force you to do 'your Duty; he only enables you to do 'what is fit and reaſonable: If, on your 'part, you will not be wanting to your 'ſelves in that which you may do, you may 'be ſure on that condition all will be well. 'Reaſon then like Men, reaſon ſeriouſly, 'reaſon ſincerely, reaſon to the beſt of your 'power, and make uſe of the Helps and 'Means of Information, that in your Circumſtances you can, to be inabled, as far as in 'you lieth, to reaſon right. Then you 'will do what Men can do; and aſſure 'your ſelves that God is too favourable to 'ſo honeſt Diſpoſitions, to ſuffer that any 'Obſtacles ſhould prejudice you. This 'doth not imply that you ſhall then infallibly diſcover all Philoſophical, or all Theological Truths, but, as was ſaid, all 'Truths, at leaſt, that are abſolutely neceſſary for you to know. If any Man doth 'not diſcern, what it is neceſſary he ſhould 'diſcern in order to his Salvation, it is utterly his Fault; it is becauſe he has wilfully neglected to do what he might have 'done; he has not been willing to take the 'pains to reflect, or would not uſe the 'freedom of his own Conſideration, and 'hearken to what his own Conſcience and 'Reaſon would have truly ſuggeſted to him, 'if he had been ſerious and ſincere. Now 'you may apply this to the ſeveral Caſes of 'all Perſons that have fail'd in their indiſpenſable Duty. *Adam* fell, not becauſe he 'hearkned to Reaſon, but becauſe he would 'not hearken to it. His own Reaſon and 'Conſcience teſtified to his face, it was better to diſpleaſe his Wife, than to diſobey 'God; yet he wilfully and raſhly preferred to live and die with her: That was 'the preſumptuous determination of his 'own Free-will, and not the fault of the 'Faculty of his Underſtanding. He determined to act contrary to his own Reaſon, 'and to neglect the conſulting ſincerely his 'Conſcience: But if he would have done 'that which was in his power to do, and 'which he knew was reaſonable, he had 'never erred. It was not therefore his Underſtanding's miſrepreſenting of things to 'him when he conſulted it, or his Reaſon's 'deceiving him that occaſioned him to 'fall; no more than it is thro' a wiſe and 'good Friend's Fault, or bad Counſel, that 'we do ill, when we do not ſo much as ask 'his Advice, but reſolve beforehand to do 'quite contrary to what we may gueſs he 'would adviſe us. Human Reaſon was ſuch

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'a Friend to Man's Will. 'Tis then a mis-
'take to ſay, it was that Noble Faculty that
'was deceivable. And 'tis no leſs an error
'to think it is that which has ever deceiv'd
'any Men, when they were come to the uſe
'of it, and could conſider, but did not. Vi-
'ſibly it is not thro' Reaſon, but thro' the
'wilful neglect, or ſhameful abuſe thereof,
'that Men do any thing ill. Now, it is the
'higheſt piece of Inconſideration, to con-
'found Things themſelves with the uſe that
'is made of them. At that rate we ſhould
'attribute to the Holy Scripture, the ill
'work ſome Men make with it; and, on
'that account, ſhould counſel People
'not to meddle with, or ever be conver-
'ſant in the Word of God. It is certain,
'that ſince Man's Corruption, Reaſon has
'been in a great meaſure uſeleſs in the
'World, (only it will ſerve to juſtify God,
'and condemn Men, ſeeing they might
'have known and done better, and they
'would not:) but it was ever Mens own
'Fault, if they have not at any time, when
'they were anſwerable for their Actions,
'made that uſe of their Reaſon, which it
'was neceſſary for them to do in order to
'their happineſs. It is ſuch a Fault, as
'that of thoſe who have the Scripture in
'their hands, and will not make a good uſe
'of it. Now to ſet ſuch People right, we
'are not to excuſe them upon any account,
'from ſtudying the Holy Scripture to the
'beſt of their power: It would be ridicu-
'lous to tell them, You have been brought
'up in a ſhameful neglect of God's Word;
'you have ſtrange Prejudices againſt the
'reading, as well as againſt the under-
'ſtanding of it in its moſt credible ſenſe:
'In your opinion it is very much againſt
'the Intereſt of your Fleſh to practiſe the
'Doctrine of the Goſpel; you are very par-
'tial and ignorant: Therefore the Scrip-
'ture is a very bad Book; there is no ſuch
'thing as a true Divine Writing, nor can
'be in the Land of the Living; you had
'not beſt meddle with it, it's deceivable,
'and 'twill certainly deceive ye. Surely,
'we ſhould rather tell them, The Holy
'Scripture is a Divine and moſt perfect
'Writing, inſpired and dictated by the Ho-
'ly Ghoſt, who infallibly knew what was
'moſt requiſite for the ſaving Inſtruction of
'Mankind, and who has given that Sacred
'Book for that end to Men; we may there-
'fore conclude, that it contains all things
'neceſſary to Salvation, in a clear and intel-
'ligible manner: If then you have had any
'Prejudices againſt it, ſhake 'em off, and
'ſearch the Scriptures. In like manner,
'Men ought to ſhake off all Prejudices a-
'gainſt Reaſon, and no longer to neglect
'the making a good and conſtant uſe there-
'of, but to ſtudy, to the beſt of our pow-
'er, to diſcern whatſoever is reaſonable,
'and ſincerely to follow it. You will ſay;
'We cannot go over the whole World to
'preach Reaſon, to all Men who labour un-
'der Prejudices. I anſwer, Reaſon it ſelf
'doth it in a ſufficient meaſure, as to all
'things indiſpenſibly neceſſary to Salvati-
'on; and 'tis utterly Mens fault if they do
'not follow that which they may know to
'be reaſonable. But, you'l urge; Since
'*Adam*'s Sin, Man's Will has loſt its Power
'and Freedom; and the Will being cor-
'rupted, depraves neceſſarily the Under-
'ſtanding: For if Men not only will not
'conſider, but cannot will or reſolve to do
'it; it is falſe to ſay, they have the uſe of
'a Faculty whereby to diſcern all things
'neceſſary. I anſwer, This Objection is un-
'worthy of the Name of a Chriſtian. If
'God had not reſolv'd to redeem Mankind,
'he would have plung'd *Adam* and *Eve* in-
'to the Pit of Hell immediately after their
'Sin, and would not have ſuffered them to
'propagate a wretched Progeny, that had
'been under a neceſſity of ſinning. But
'ſeeing God preſerved the World, and bare
'with Men, it was an infallible ſign he
'would aſſiſt them, as far as was neceſſary,
'to recover the Liberty of the Sons of
'God. Which is confirmed by the Apoſtle
'St. *Paul*, Rom. 2. 4. *Knoweſt thou not that*
'*the Goodneſs of God leadeth thee to Repen-*
'*tance?* And at the 14*th* and 15*th* Verſes:
'*When the Gentiles, which have not the help*
'*and advantage of Revelation, do by nature*
'*the things contained in the revealed Law;*

'*these having not that Law, are a Law unto themselves, which shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience bearing them witness, and their thoughts accusing, or else excusing them.* This doth demonstrate that Men have the use of their Understanding, and that they may not only have the Will to consider, but that they all may consider and reason well, and act agreeably thereunto in all things absolutely necessary. Indeed the *Gentiles* do not know how Man's Will came to be depraved, what Assistance he stood in need of, and, much less, to whom he is obliged for the procuring of that Assistance. Howbeit, they injoy the Benefit which our Blessed Saviour has procured to Mankind by his Death; altho they know not their Benefactor, who designed not any Advantage to himself from Men, but sought only the Good of the World, and the Glorifying of God; and came to do that, upon the account and prevision of which, God preserved and assisted Man, and by His Grace enabled him to know and practise all the indispensably-necessary Dutys of the Everlasting Gospel; which is the Sum of Christianity, or the Essence of the Religion which our Blessed Lord manifested and confirmed, and which is denominated by His Sacred Name, and is sometime called *Christ* in Scripture, and the *Son* *; that is to say, the Means of Salvation granted to Men thro' the Mediation of the Son; or the Gospel founded upon the Blood and Merits of Christ. But tho the *Gentiles* are ignorant of these things, yet those that enjoy the Revelation of the Gospel might know them; for that teacheth us expressly, that it is God which worketh in us, both to Will and to Do of His good Pleasure. It must then be very absurd for any Christian to pretend, that Men have not the use of their Free-will, and consequently are not able to consider and reason. That is a Notion infinitely injurious to the Redemption of Christ, and to the Goodness of God, who has rais'd up to us a Saviour, in whom, and thro' whom, we have obtain'd a milder Covenant, than that which was at first made with *Adam*. Howbeit, my meaning is not, that Men now need but to will, and condescend to one Act or two of Consideration or Reflexion; and that then they shall certainly discern whatsoever is necessary. This was probably Man's Power in his Primitive Excellency. Now it is necessary to take a little more pains and time. But it is certain, that if we do what we can, what is rational and visibly necessary for us to do; if we proceed upon such Rules, which every sincere and considering Man's Conscience testifys to be fit and requisite to be used, to be able to pass a true and certain Judgment: Reason will not misguide us, but will infallibly lead us to the knowledg of that which is necessary for us to know: And not only so, but it appears we cannot arrive to any degree of true Faith, without thus acting agreeably to the Laws of Reason, and proceeding upon the Rules of common Sense; for otherwise we should assent to we know not what, or should believe without knowing any valuable reason why or wherefore. It is then very preposterous to recommend to us the belief of any thing, and at the same time to deter us from Reason, and forbid the regular Use of our Understanding. Those are Quacks in Religion and Philosophy, that do thus abuse Reason, dishonour their Human Nature, and represent God as a hard Master, and the Dutys of Christianity as impossible to be practised.

* *John* 3. 36. *Acts* 4. 12. 1 *John* 5. 12. *Rom.* 3. 22. & 8. 1. & 8. 2. & 10. 4. 1 *Cor.* 3. 1. & 4. 15. & 4. 17. *Gal.* 4. 19. & 5. 6. & 6. 15.

By what has been said, it is easy to discern the Absurdity of that Expression of the *Censurer*'s (P. 3.) 'Reason, one would 'think, might have been allowed to bear 'some share of the Blame; and their Miscarriages might have served for a Caution 'to others how they trusted the same Conduct.

As if *Men*, that did any thing that was very bad and *unreasonable*, were then guided by *Reason*, and acted agreeably to *Reason*. Or

Or as if ſome *Mens* acting contrary to *Reaſon*, was an Argument againſt uſing the Method propoſed by the *Remarker*, that is, ſtudying what is reaſonable, and proceeding upon the known (or eaſy to be known) Rules of *Reaſon*.

Other Mens *Miſcarriages* and groſs *Miſtakes*, indeed, ſhould deter us from following the *Cenſurer*'s wrong Method, and warn us againſt paſſing a *raſh* Judgment, or judging before we have well conſider'd Things, and duly conſulted *Reaſon*, and obſerved its evident Directions.

We ſhould thereby be *cautioned how we truſted the ſame ill Conduct*; and how, for inſtance, we *haſtily determined*, that there is any place in the Word of God, that muſt be believed to imply, *That Men have not ſuch a Faculty, as will certainly lead them to the knowledg and belief of all neceſſary Truths, if they take ſuch Ways, and uſe ſuch Means as all ſincere and conſidering Men may diſcern, and may eaſily be perſuaded to be reaſonable and neceſſary.*

Certainly, if we acted according to this Rule, which has been ſhewn to be ſo *reaſonable*, we ſhould not err grievouſly; we ſhould not fright Men away from *Chriſtianity*, and thereby, as much as in us lay, render odious to Men thoſe things which, in themſelves, are the greateſt Motives poſſible to the ſtricteſt Holineſs and Piety; we ſhould not *declaim* againſt *Reaſon*; we ſhould not, in fine, moſt uncharitably *cenſure* and calumniate thoſe that exhort others to make a *ſincere* and *regular* uſe of their *Reaſon*.

But methinks I hear the *Cenſurer*, yet incorrigibly, applauding himſelf, and exclaiming; 'We! Who's that, We? Is not 'Reaſon the Man? If then, We are guilty 'of Blunders and Errors; is not *Reaſon* the 'fault? What, it is the *Mind*, 'I warrant, and not *Reaſon!* '* *I ſay the ſame of Eyes; If* 'they miſlead, they are not 'Eyes, they are only Balls ſtuff'd up with that 'kind of Ingredients, &c.

* *Cenſure.* P. 14.

I anſwer; This is the Stone, Mr. *Cenſurer*, which has very innocently thrown you down, becauſe you would needs run upon it with your Eyes open, and would not conſider that you was out of the way: You do not *diſtinguiſh* what (if you pleaſed to reflect upon it you might diſcern) is in it ſelf very *diſtinct*, and therefore you attribute the fault to that which is not guilty.

As for our *Eyes* (ſince you are pleaſed to make uſe of that Compariſon) you muſt be a great ſtranger to *Reaſon* and *Philoſophy*, if you do not know that they can never be accuſed of *deceiving* us.

Doth a Stick which is *ſtreight* ſeem *crooked*, when part of it is laid in Water? Naturaliſts will tell ye, that it ought then to appear ſo, according to the known *Laws* of Motion; that our *Eyes* do then *truly* their *Office*, repreſenting the *neceſſary* Effect of the different *Mediums*; that if, not conſidering that Circumſtance, we ſhould hereupon paſs a wrong Judgment, it would not be the *fault* of our *Eyes*, but of our *Precipitancy* in judging, before we have made the *trial* and *examination* which we might have made; that, therefore, it cannot be ſaid that our *Eyes miſlead* us; but if we miſinterpret any thing they acquaint us with, it is *ſcandalum acceptum*, and not *datum*.

Even in the caſe of the *Jaundice*, if we are not Children or Fools, we may ſoon perceive that our *Eyes* are tinctured with a bilious and yellow Humour, and that therefore we have no reaſon to conclude that every thing we ſee is Yellow; neither indeed that ſome of it is not really ſo, but that in reaſon, in that Circumſtance, we ought to *ſuſpend* our Judgment till we meet with more *certain Information*.

But (upon ſecond thoughts) you may poſſibly ſay, there is a great difference between our *Eyes* and our *Reaſon*. Our *Eyes* are but the Glaſs-windows of the Houſe where our *Soul* dwells: The Windows do their natural Office neceſſarily, and they always do what we can expect from them, and are never in *fault*: But our *Reaſon* is our *Soul*, and *our Soul* is *our ſelves*: If *we* then, as was ſaid, do any thing ill, it is our *Reaſon* that doth it.

I anſwer; Our *Reaſon* is no more our *Soul*, than *Seeing*, or any other *Faculty*, is

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the *Soul*. The Soul *has the uſe* of theſe *Facultys*; but the Soul *is not* properly any of them.

You'll ask me perhaps, What the *Soul* then properly is? To this I will anſwer very briefly, *I cannot tell, and, for ought I ſee, God only knoweth.* We do not know, *what* poſitively any *Thing* is in it ſelf. We may only obſerve ſome of the *Qualitys* or *Propertys* of the Things, of which we know ſomething; but the *Eſſence* of Things is above our Thoughts.

God has created Us: But what that, Us, expreſly is, He has not taught, nor given us the means to know: Only we may perceive, He has given us the *uſe* of ſome *Powers* that will perform their *Office*, according to certain *Laws* and *Conditions*.

For inſtance, Our Almighty Creator has given us the *Power* to *ſee* ſome *material Objects*, (as exactly as it concerns us in this World to ſee them;) if we *open* our *Eyes*, *turn* our ſelves *towards the Object*, and come at a *certain diſtance* of it, when *no opack* matter is *betwixt* our *Eyes* and the *Object* which we would *ſee*, and when the *Sun ſhines*, or the Air is *illuminated* by ſome other *luminous* Body. If we neglected, or fail'd in any of theſe *Circumſtances* and *Rules* of *ſeeing*, and yet expected to *ſee*, we ſhould be fruſtrated of our Expectation. For God gave us *Power* to *ſee*, only on theſe *Conditions*.

In like manner, God has given us the *Power* to *conceive* the Ideas of the *Propertys* and *Effects* of ſome *Things*, to *compare* thoſe Ideas, and to *judg* of them, and draw ſome *Conſequences* from them; that is to ſay, to *think* and *reaſon*, and, as far as it concerns us now to do ſo, to think and reaſon *exactly:* And this excellent *Power* will certainly do *its Office*, if we do *our part*; for, as we cannot *ſee*, ſo we cannot *reaſon*, without obſerving ſome *Conditions* and *Rules*.

Indeed, our *Eyes* are *naturally* diſpoſed to *open* themſelves, and *look* about them; and therefore they often do ſo, without any *deſign*. But that is not a making *uſe* of our *Eyes:* We only, properly, make *uſe* of them, when we *determine* them to ſome Object that we deſire to *ſee*. God is the Author of the *natural* Propenſion of our *Eyes* to *open* themſelves: And his deſign in it is, to ſhew us that there are viſible Objects, about which we may exerciſe, as we pleaſe, the *Power* He has given us to *ſee*, according to the *Law*, which we ſhall eaſily find of our ſelves by our own experience.

Thus alſo, *Reaſon naturally* exerts it ſelf, and is inclined to *think* whether we *deſign* it or not: That is to ſay, *Reaſon* is *always* ready to receive the *Impreſſions* which the *Senſes* make upon the *conſidering Faculty*; and that *Faculty* never fails to *repreſent* thoſe Impreſſions to *us*. Now, the *Senſes* being diſpoſed to *activity* by our Great Creator, they are the Cauſe that *Reaſon* is *neceſſarily* buſied and imployed. And thereby God ſhews us, that we can *reaſon* and *diſcern*, and that we have Subjects to exerciſe our diſcerning *Faculty* upon. Then we ſee in general what theſe Subjects are; we ſeek for more, if thoſe that preſent themſelves do not ſuffice us (and whoſoever *ſeeketh*, *findeth*, as far as is *neceſſary* for every Man's Purpoſe). In ſhort, we then make *uſe* of our *Reaſon*, and imploy it our ſelves; whereas its Acts before were not properly *our* own, being altogether *natural* and *neceſſary*; but theſe are juſtly accounted *our* own, that are *determined* by *us*, and that depend of our Choice.

Here then appears another *Power* to be in Us, that is the *Power* to Will. This ſeems to be the neareſt our *Eſſence*; yet it is only one of its *Powers*, and not the *Eſſence* it ſelf. By theſe *Powers* we know our ſelves, as we know other things by ſome of their *Qualitys* and *Propertys*. But that the *Powers* of the *Soul* are diſtinct from the *Soul* it ſelf, is *ſelf-evident*; and, if we conſider it, we cannot reaſon *juſtly*, without *diſtinguiſhing* them from the *Soul*.

Howbeit, ſeeing we do not underſtand *what* the *Eſſences* of *Things* are; what we are to do here, is to conſider the *Soul*, not as any *one* ſingle *Faculty*, but as conſiſting of, or uniting *all* the *Facultys* together. And ſo, we muſt not ſay, the *Will* is the *Soul*, or *Reaſon* is the *Soul*, or *Seeing* is the *Soul*; but, the *Soul* is an immaterial and ſpiritual *Being*, which

which has the *Power* to *will*, the *Power* to *reason* and consider, and the *Power* to be *sensible* of the Impressions of *Matter*, according to some *Laws* established by the *Creator*, by which Laws the *Spirit* of Man is in some respects subjected to *Matter*, and *Matter* in some respects subjected to the *Soul*.

Now, *Man* being thus *considered*, it is evident that We may make an ill *use* of our *Reason*, and yet *Reason* not be in the *fault*: For if any Man doth not make a good *use* of his *Reason*, it is because he *will* not consider, he *will* not discern or search out the *Rules* of *Reason*; or, if he knows 'em, he *will* not act agreeably to them, he *will* proceed *rashly* and *presumptuously*; and, in doing so, he doth not take his *Reason* along with him, but shews and makes himself a *Fool*.

You'll say perhaps; This doth not yet mend the matter: For, put the best *Tools* imaginable in a *Fool*'s hand, he'll make but *foolish* work with them.

True; and I grant, that if Men are resolved to be *Fools*, *Fools* they shall be to their lives end. But then it only still remains to be considered, where indeed lieth the *fault*, and whether 'twas not in their *power* to be *otherwise*?

If the *Fools* could not help being so, they could not reasonably be found *fault* with for not being *wise*. If Men, who reason *ill*, cannot indeed reason *better*, a-God's-Name let *Reason* bear the *blame*, let it be *vilified*, yea, and accounted * *still more vile*.

* *Censure.* P. 11.

But if Men are *Fools*, not because their *Facultys* are *defective*, and they want the *Means* and *Power* to be *wise*; but because, as was said, they will *not* make *use* of those *Powers* which they *have* in their hands: O then, by all means, let *Reason* be absolved, and let's tell Men they *ought not*, they *cannot* proceed upon the true *Rules* of *Human Understanding*.

Now, if we represent Mens *Powers* as *defective*; if we tell Men that they are *not able* to *reason* justly; that they *cannot* certainly *judg* what is truly *reasonable*; that, let 'em be never so *sincere*, *use* what *means* of Information, and proceed in their consideration of Things upon what *Rules* of *Reason* they can, they must not expect a *safe* Issue of the Matter; that, if *Reason* pretends thus to discern infallibly what is Truth, and what is not Truth (yea, tho only speaking here of *Things necessary*) *Reason* is a proud *Beast*, and a vain Boaster of what it cannot perform: If, I say, we thus declaim against *Reason*; what is it we do, but *exclude Reason* from our System, and excuse Men from *knowing* or *believing* any thing, and consequently make all *Revelation ineffectual*; for, what *effect* can *Revelation* have upon *Stocks*, or things *void of Reason*? We must not then compare *Human Understanding*, * to Eyes *tinctur'd with the Jaundice*, as the *Censurer* doth. For if the *Censurer* had the *Jaundice*, he could not *possibly* judg well of *Colours*; neither would it be in his *Power* to get rid of his Distemper, tho perhaps he used the best known Medicines: But a Man who doth not make a right use of his *Reason* about religious Matters, may mend, if he pleases.

* *Censure.* P. 14.

And so, † *The Offices of the Eyes without a Man, and of Reason within, are* not *throughly parallel*, as the *Censurer* pretends they are.

† *Censure.* P. 18.

But, says the *Censurer*, ‖ *to come to the Merit of the Cause*, (*which the Remarker has thought fit wholly to avoid*) *supposing Reason to be as excellent as it can be conceived, yet this founds it no Title to be a Guide in Religion. The Remarker sometimes calls Reason a Guide; and here a Judg, anon a Counsellor. Let him then discharge himself if he can, from a continued prevarication thro' all he has written: Let him acquit himself for confounding so grosly the Notion of a Guide.*

‖ *Censure.* P. 4, 5, 11, 21.

I answer; Whether *Reason* may be said to be a *Guide* in *Religion*, as well as a *Judg* and a *Counsellor*, is so far from being *the Merit of the Cause*; and the giving to *Reason* these several Titles, is so far from being a *Prevarication*, that the *Censurer* himself, in Pages 17 and 22, owns that *Reason* may be

be ſaid to be a *Guide*, and allows that it ſhould be called ſo.

Indeed it is not in the leaſt degree *eſſential* to the Controverſy, whether you ſay, that we ought not to receive any thing as Truth, but what *Reaſon*, uſing the means of Information *guides* us to; or *judgeth* we ought to believe; or *counſelleth* us to believe.

Suppoſe you was to ſend a *Child*, of five or ſix Years old, to travel from one end of *Europe*, to the other; you'd ſcarce ſend him alone, but in all probability would procure ſome *Man* to *accompany* him. You could hardly get any Man that were perfectly expert in all the Roads of *Europe*; but you might find ſome one that could make ſhift to ſearch them out, and that could ſoon learn to ask his Way any whither. Now would not it be a wiſe Subject to diſcuſs, whether your *Child* ought to *follow* this *Man*, as a *Guide*, or a *Judg*, or a *Counſellor*, whoſe Counſel is to be taken? Prethee, what matters it, ſo he be to *follow* him?

Ay; but you urge, the *Remarker* calls *Reaſon* the *Supreme Guide*: and * *a Man can't call Reaſon the Supreme Guide, in any ſenſe*, without being an *Infidel*, or *Heretick*.

* *Cenſure*, p. 22.

Bona verba. Mr. *Cenſurer*, *Ne fumetis!* The *Remarker* (at the end of the 4*th* Page of the *Remarks*, at which you are ſo angry) calls *Reaſon* the *ſupreme Guide*, only *as it guides Faith*: Which implies, that we do not *firſt believe*, and *then ſee* whether there be any *Reaſon* for our *Belief*, (for that were like *Executing* a Man *firſt*, and *Trying* him *afterwards*) but we are in the *firſt* place to *reaſon*, and *then believe*, if there is cauſe. Now ſurely, Sir, it doth not neceſſarily follow, that whoſoever ſaith this, muſt needs be a *Heretick*, and even an *Infidel*. Your indebted Friend, Mr. *Y.* allows this *Supremacy* to *Reaſon*, in his Pages 49 and 64. as the *Remarker* obſerves, in the 6*th* and 7*th* Pages of the *Remarks*. You'll not then, I hope, make *Infidels* and *Hereticks* of all Men, when they talk ſenſe.

But, ſay you, ſhall we * *aſcribe to Reaſon a Property that belongs incommunicably to the Spirit of God, which is to guide us into Divine Truth?* St. *John* 16. 13.

* *Cenſure*. p. 6.

But (I reply,) Who told you, that this is *a Property that belongs incommunicably to the Spirit?* Has not God *communicated this Property* to the very *Heavens* and the viſible *Works* of the Creation, and to every Man's *Conſcience*?

There are *ordinary*, and *extraordinary* ways of *guiding* Men into *Divine Truth*; And *Revelation* contains ſome Truths, that *Reaſon* of it ſelf could not have diſcerned: But even thoſe Truths, when *revealed* by the *Spirit*, muſt undergo *Reaſon's* ſcrutiny; ſeeing we muſt *reaſon* before we *believe*. Ask elſe, as I ſaid, Mr. *Y.* in his Pages 49 and 64. and conſult the Holy *Scripture*, which ſaith, *Prove all things, Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits*: Surely, not try the Suggeſtions of the *Spirit*, by the Suggeſtions of the *Spirit*, *in infinitum*; therefore it muſt be by ſome other Means.

But you call this, *oppoſing Reaſon to Faith*, in the firſt Line of your 7*th* Page; therefore it is viſible you introduce, or would ſet up *Credulous Fanaticiſm*, and thereby you *take away* from *Reaſon*, all that you might be ſuppoſed to have *granted* to it.

Whereas in this caſe, the *Remarker's* Syſtem would refer Men to the Primary Rule, *Reaſon* and the *Light of Nature*; for which you ſo maul the *Remarker*, in your 9*th* Page, where you determine, that the Inſtructions of the Book of Nature are *ſo jejune*, and you obſerve, that *St. Paul never ſends Chriſtians for their Learning thither*.

But, Sir, Men are not born *Chriſtians*; and tho, when they are firmly grounded in the Truth of *Chriſtianity*, that ſufficeth them, yet they cannot be thus grounded, without any Arguments: For we muſt have good and ſolid *Reaſon* for what we *believe*, otherwiſe our *Belief* were not *Faith*, but *Conceit* and *Credulity*; which are not things

that

that will carry Men to *Heaven*, or will be able to make them truly *virtuous*; for when Men think of it, they will ſcarce think it fit to conteſt with an impetuous *Luſt*, for the ſake of any *Notion*, for the Belief of which they know no ſolid and convincing *Reaſon*.

You may tell me that there is a huge *Treaſure* at the bottom of the Sea, conſiſting of Gold, Pearls and Diamonds, more than would fill ten Men of War; that you have been told in a Dream, of the place where it lay, and that you and I ſhould one day ſhare it. Why, this may perchance pleaſe my *Fancy*, and I may wiſh it were true, and poſſibly wiſhing it to be ſo, perſwade my ſelf I *believe* it, and uſe my ſelf to tell you I do.

But after all, if you tell me of no other *reaſon* to *believe* it, but that you *dreamt* it was *revealed* to you, I ſhould be a *Credulous* Fool if I were ſo eaſily ſatisfied: And if I did diſpoſe of my Faith at ſo extravagant a rate, it is not likely that ſo *forward* a *Belief*, when I knew *no reaſon* for't, ſhould laſt a long time, *vigorous* enough to produce its *effect*. The *forwardeſt* Paſſions, are the ſooneſt *calmed*.

If I was to learn to *Dive* in order to come to this *Treaſure*, the firſt time I threw my ſelf into the Sea, it would be perhaps with a very good Heart, and with a full purpoſe to maſter all Difficulties: but having once drunk a little too much Salt-water, and being very ſick, you and I no doubt will then reflect, whether your *Dream* might not be an *Illuſion*; and in that (more than) uncertainty, we'd *put off* our *diving* again to *another time*, till we had *a convenient Opportunity*, which indeed we would never look for *as long as we lived*.

Whereas if I was *credibly informed*, that a certain proud, and uncharitable *Dives*, riding with ſuch a freighted *Armado* of his own, was there purſued by the Divine Vengeance, and in a Hurrican, terrible with Thunder-claps and Lightnings, his Ships were daſhed againſt the Rocks, and himſelf, his *Treaſure* and his Men ſwallowed up by the Waves, about that place: this would make me hearken.

But much more determined ſhould I be to believe your Dream, if I my ſelf viewing the Rocks narrowly found ſome part of the Ships ſtucking there; and in ſome *ſhallow* place of the Sea, could diſcern in a *clear Day*, ſome of the *Treaſure*, with my own *Eyes*. Then indeed we ſhould *neglect nothing* to verify the Revelation.

Aſſure your ſelf, Sir, Men do not truly *believe* that moſt true Religion, which they profeſs, till their *Reaſon* be *convinced* of the ſolidity of its Proofs. And we meet daily with ſuch Difficulties in our *Chriſtian* Warfare, that tho we be *Chriſtians*, we need every day to have preſent before our *Eyes* all the *Arguments* of the *Truth* of *Chriſtianity*.

And is that no *Argument* of the *Truth* of the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt*, *That it is perfectly agreeable to the ſerious Reflections of our cleareſt Reaſon?* And doth St. *Paul* never refer us to this, when he bids us *judg what he ſaith*, and tells us he ſpeaks to us, as to *Men?* And, *Rom.* 10. 8. when he aſſerts, that *the Word is nigh thee, even in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart?*

What makes you then repreſent *Reaſon* (in the 3*d* Line of your 13*th* Page) as *al together a Stranger in the way* of Religion If what *Socinus* thought was true, that Men cannot diſcern any of the Duties of Religion by the mere *Light of Nature*, (which I am very far from believing) yet this which is the main buſineſs that concerns us is inconteſtable, that when the Duties of Religion are *revealed*, and we are thereby made to reflect upon them, their *reaſonableneſs* appears very conſpicuous, if we attend *ſincerely* upon their *conſideration*, as we are then not only enabled, but facilitated to do.

Whether Men are able to invent Arts *of themſelves*, or whether not only an *occaſion* miniſtred by *Providence*, but even the Hand of an helping *Angel* directs that way, the Brains and animal Spirits of the Inventors; howbeit, when we are in the way,

we plainly ſee the *reaſon* of the thing, and we may eaſily improve the firſt Diſcoveries, and are able to *reaſon* about the matter, and to *judg* what is fit, and what is poſſible.

But you will ſay, *Chriſtian* Religion has *Myſteries* that do abſolutely ſurpaſs the *Capacity* of *Reaſon:* True *Reaſon* of it ſelf *could not have diſcovered them*; and when diſcovered, *doth not fully comprehend them.* But if you mean, that when they are *revealed*, *Reaſon* cannot *judg* in what *Generality* or in what *particular* ſenſe they are *revealed*, and whether they are *revealed* in an *impoſſible* ſenſe, ſo that the *Revelation* ſhould be concluded falſe, or whether in a *credible*, ſo that 'tis no obſtacle againſt our receiving the *Revelation*: the denying any thing of this to *Reaſon* is a *Roman Catholick* Error.

When St. *Paul* preached the *Myſtery* of the *Reſurrection of the Body*, he argued from *Reaſon* about it. *Why ſhould it ſeem a thing incredible with you, that God ſhould raiſe the Dead?* &c.

And indeed *Reaſon* is the general way of perſwading *Men.* Even the *Greeks*, notwithſtanding the confuſion of their Theology, will teach it you.

'Dixit Dominus, *Sequimini me & faciam vos Piſcatores hominum*; nihil aliud 'invenies niſi Doctrinam ac Rationem. In 'hominem enim nulla valet funda vel rete 'ſicut Doctrina Rationibus contexta; his 'enim irretitur Homo, & Deo adjungitur, 'ut in æternum beatus ſit. Hæc ſcilicet 'Doctrina funda eſt, jacta in utramque Navigii partem. Hæc hamus eſt; Rationibus enim & Teſtimoniis, ſpiritus ipſa hominis viſcera corripit, & ad cognitionis 'Divinæ Lumen, velut Piſcem trahit. 'Quoniam etiam ipſe Homo Lux eſt per 'intellectum & Sapientiæ & Scientiæ capax. Nam poſt multos Labores & Sudores tandem innaſcitur, & ſe exerit & 'generatur Sapientia in anima & mente viri 'boni, & tunc fit Lux. *P.* 3. *Orat. Neophyti Metropolit. Philippopol. ad Academ. Cantab.* 1701.

Nor contrary to this are any of the places of *Scripture*, which ſpeak againſt *Mens Wiſdom*; as you will ſee, if you compare ſuch expreſſions with thoſe which recommend to us our own ſincere Judgment of Diſcretion, and then accord the one with the other: And if you obſerve the Context, and the Deſign of the Writer; you will find, that when ever *Man's Wiſdom* is *condemned*, thereby viſibly is meant the *abuſe*, or *vain uſe* of *Reaſon*, and the *raſh* Conceit and Affection of *unſincere* Men, who govern themſelves by the Rules of *Senſuality and Folly.*

But as for *right Reaſon*, which the Divine *Logos*, the Eternal *Sun* of Righteouſneſs, has *enkindled* afreſh, or *ſtrengthned* in us; how can we think that ſhould be condemned? The very *Roman Catholicks* cannot but own it to be the *ſupreme Gnide*; tho perhaps they are not aware of it: *Concilia non habent immediatas Revelationes; ſed ex verbo Dei, per Ratiocinationem, deducunt Concluſiones:* The Fathers who ſit as Judges of Controverſies in the Councils do not diſcern the Truth by immediate Revelations, but they *draw Conſequences from Scripture*, by *Arguing* and conſidering, that is, making uſe of *Reaſon.* Bellarm. de Concil. Auct. Lib. 2. Cap. 12.

He ſeemed not far from the Kingdom of God, that ſaid: *If we could attain to this point, to ſhew that Faith has nothing that is contrary to Reaſon, but agrees perfectly with it, in the Adoration of God which it requires of us; we ſhould draw all the World to the Church, becauſe Natural Reaſon is the ſame in all Men*, &c. Father *Yves* Natural Theology, *p.* 31.

And that was certainly a *ſaying*, worthy of a *Chriſtian Philoſopher: Nihil affirmo, nihilque ab ullo credi velim, niſi quod ipſi evidens, & invicta Ratio perſuadebit.* Cartes. Princip. Part. 4. Artic. 207.

I aſſert not any thing, neither do I deſire any thing ſhould be believed, but what may be prov'd to be credible, by clear and unanſwerable *Reaſon.*

Then, (you ſay) * *the Remarker ſhould be congratulated for two or three Iſſues. As firſt, that he* * *Cenſure*, p. 4.

has.

has given Men such a comfortable Evidence, that they ought to believe themselves Wise: that being the consequence of the Remarker's Doctrine.

Poor *reasoning*, Mr. *Censurer!* It well appears you are resolved, your System should have very little to do with *Reason*. And well may the *Faculty* prove obstinate to have as little to do with you, seeing how you expose it in every Sentence. Truly, if that was its fault, it need not be *more vile*.

But, Sir, the truth of the matter is, the *Remarker* has given Men this comfortable Evidence, *That they have an excellent Faculty, which will direct them in all things necessary, if they proceed as they may upon the known, or easy to be known, Rules of Reason*. And Men may be thankful to God, for the *Understanding* and *Power* God has given them. Whether any Man has reason to be *proud* for having done his Duty, is a thing apart. And it is to be considered, Whether it be not rather agreeable to the Rules of *Reason*, that *Men* should be *modest*, seeing that they have received all their Perfections from God, and that how excellent soever be their *Understanding*, they may easily *err*, if they be *hasty* and *rash*, or *presumptuous*.

But as for the *Faculty* it self, indeed we can scarce say too great things of it. In a vulgar way of speaking, to which we have been habituated, through a corrupt Custom; we may say, that Human Understanding (or *Reason*) *is not infallible, but may err even in things necessary, if it take not heed to those Rules which*, &c. as the *Remarker* expresses himself, at the latter end of the last Column of the *Remarks*; by *Reason*, understanding in that place, *our selves*, and the *use* we make of our *Reason*. But I must confess that is not natural, or exact: Properly speaking, we must say, the *Faculty*, like our *senses*, is *infallible*, and *never deceives* us; tho *we* may *deceive* our selves, if *we'll* be too decisive, and *will* conclude too fast, when the *Rules* of *Reason* point to us a *Wiser* Method.

That does in all its slow Resolves advance,
With graver steps than Benchers, when they dance.

The *Distinction*, which we have observed ought to be made between our *Reason*, and our *Will*, or our selves, (seeing that by our *Will* we make *use* of the *Faculty*, which enlightens, but forces not the *Will*) shews that the *Censurer* had no *Reason* to object, as he doth: * *That the Remarker has fortified Reason with such Rules, as perhaps were wanting heretofore; but after such Rules prescribed for Reason to proceed by, there is little fear of mistaking again, like* Adam, *who had not presence of Mind to consider.* * *Censure.* p. 4.

Once more I must tell ye, we may have very good *Rules* to walk by; and yet wilfully *neglect* them. *Adam*'s Sin proceeded not, from that he wanted *presence of Mind*, and was not *able*, or *knew* not to do better; but it consisted in that he did what his *Conscience* testified he ought not to do. The *Fault* was not in the *Understanding*, but in the *Will*. No Man can be damned, for doing what he cannot know, ought not to be done. Every Man will be saved, that doth what he may do.

'Tis we indeed may often want presence of Mind, especially till we have arrived to the stature of the Sons of God: And even when we have divested our selves from every habit of Sin, tho it would be unnatural for us to be then guilty of any heinous and wilful Crime, yet 'twould not be so strange, if we sometime unhappily fell by surprize, into some lesser fault. But we ought to endeavour, every day to grow better and more considerate.

Our Blunders and Oversights ought not to deter us from considering again, no more than a Child's Fall is to hinder him from ever after making use of his Legs. Has the Babe fallen? Let it fall again; that will teach it to look to it self better another time: and thus by use it will gather strength; whereas if it sat always idle, 'twould never learn to walk.

What God indiſpenſibly requires, is, that Men be *ſincere*; that is, do the beſt they can in their Circumſtances to diſcern the Truth, and live according to what they are able to diſcover to be their Duty: For theſe Meaſures cannot fail to lead every Man to whatſoever is abſolutely *neceſſary* to his *Salvation*.

* *Cenſure.* p. 5. [Object.] * *But if Reaſon could poſſibly have led us into the knowledg of what we are to do and believe, God would certainly have ſpared the Miſſion both of his Servants, and his Son: Had Reaſon been ſufficient to be a Guide in theſe matters, what need had God to furniſh us with another?*

[*Anſw.*] That is to ſay, that if your *Child* did any thing, that he might well enough know, *of himſelf*, to be ill; you being a *good Father*, would e'en let him take his courſe, and would not endeavour, by repreſenting his Duty to him, to *ſet him right*.

But God, for ever bleſſed be His great and good Name! has been of another Mind. And *Revelation* is an *Advantage*, for which we can never be thankful enough. Yea 'tis an *Advantage* to the whole Race of *Mankind*; there being ſcarce any corner in the World where there have not been ſome Men that knew and believed a *Revelation*, and put other Men in mind, by their Doctrine, of the general *Duty* of Religion, and the Credibility of a *future State*.

Thus we have gone through whatſoever is eſſential in the *Cenſurer*'s expreſs *Declamation* againſt *Reaſon*; whereby he endeavours to repreſent *Reaſon* as *unfit*, and *unable*, to perform thoſe *Offices*, which all *Proteſtants* attribute to it. Now we may obſerve he is alſo guilty of the ſame *fault*, even,

2*ly*, *When he intimates, what is to be the uſe of Reaſon.* In his 17*th* Page, he laughs at that Expedient of *Reaſon*, both to *follow and lead together*; and repreſents *Scripture*, diſcourſing with a bold *Critick*, (meaning the *Remarker* or the Man that will hearken to *Reaſon*) and tutoring him in theſe words: *Your Eyes are only to obſerve and follow me.* Whereby he gives us an Idea, of the moſt difficult paſſages of Holy *Scripture*, as of a Living and viſible Guide on whoſe heels we tread, and whom to follow very exactly, we need but caſt a glance.

In thoſe two Periods, the *Cenſurer* has comprized the Subſtance of his long *Story* or *Parable*. Therein he ſhews, what he takes to be the *Office* of *Reaſon*, both *Negatively* and *Poſitively*.

Negatively; he ſuppoſes, *that Reaſon is not to follow and lead together*; becauſe, as he thinks, that were to deſert the *Conduct* of *Scripture*, or to *alter* its ſenſe. *Poſitively*; He conſequently means, *That Reaſon is only to obſerve and follow what at the firſt bluſh ſeems to be the import of Scripture.* In both particulars, the *Cenſurer* viſibly *takes away* the due *uſe* of *Reaſon*.

Firſt when he ſaith, *That Reaſon is not to follow and lead together*, &c. There he ſtill *abuſeth Human Reaſon*, as if, whenever it offers to examine the firſt appearances of the Intimations of *Scripture*, it thereby affronted the *Holy Writings*, imputed error to the *Text*, and went about to *correct the word of God*. It is an unpardonable Inconſideration in the *Cenſurer*, not to diſcern that it is an effect of the greateſt Concernment for God's Will, and of the higheſt Veneration for the Holy *Scripture*, to uſe all the care and means poſſible to underſtand it right; and that to do ſo, is not to deſert the *Conduct* of Holy *Scripture*, or to go about to *alter* its ſenſe, but truly to ſeek to be guided thereby, and to take the only way in order thereto. If *Reaſon* was not to *lead* us in the intelligence of *Scripture*, how could we underſtand any one *Text*? If the regular, or the earneſt and utmoſt Endeavours of *Reaſon*, to diſcover the true ſenſe of *Scripture*, were criminal; then *Reaſon* muſt ſit ſtill, and be idle. When you read theſe words, *This is my Body*; *The Arm of the Lord*, *the Bowels of the Lord*; *It repented the Lord*, *and it grieved him at his Heart*, and the like; *Reaſon* according to the *Cenſurer*'s Notion cannot argue the matter, or be ſuffered to ſpeak *freely* what ſhe thinks of it: For that were to *follow and lead together*.

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Secondly, When the *Cenſurer* ſays, *That Reaſon is only to obſerve and follow*; He forbids us the due *uſe* of *Reaſon*, in ſearching out the Senſe of the ſcriptural Expreſſions, and plainly intimates that *Men* have nothing to do but to *read* the Words, and to underſtand them in the Senſe that firſt preſents it ſelf: For, as was obſerved, if *Reaſon* ventured any further, it would *lead*; and that is a horrible Crime, how *reaſonably* ſoever *Reaſon* may be ſuppoſed to proceed.

If it be ſo, truly there's very little, if any thing, incumbent upon *Reaſon*: For the firſt Impreſſions of the Objects upon our Minds are natural, and are improperly therefore termed our own Acts. But if we will oblige our ſelves to reſt there, without allowing each other the liberty to *reaſon* the beſt we can thereupon, we ſhall often reduce our ſelves to the neceſſity of erring. If that Rule were admitted in *Natural Philoſophy*, we ſhould be neceſſitated to determine, that a *ſtreight* Stick is *crooked*, it appearing ſo when part of it is in Water. And allowing the ſame Rule in *Divinity*, Proteſtants muſt be forc'd to own, that a piece of *Bread* is a Man's *Body*; for ſo ſays expreſly the Scripture, *This is my Body*; and wo be to Human Reaſon now, if it be ſo bold as to object any thing: the Text is poſitive, *Reaſon is only to obſerve and follow.*

Thus, by the *Cenſurer*'s Verdict, *Proteſtants* muſt be irremiſſibly condemned, and himſelf conſequently among the reſt. For tho he will not ſuffer Men to *reaſon*, in order to prove that ſome other Senſe of *Scripture* ought ſometime to be preferred to that which is the firſt apparent; yet, no doubt, he will take the liberty to determine, as he thinks to ſee cauſe, with or without *reaſon*, in what Senſe the *Scripture* ought to be underſtood.

Indeed, when ſuch Men, as this Author of an inconſiſtent Syſtem, forbid us *reaſoning*, their meaning is, That we have nothing to do, but to know to what Senſe they arbitrarily interpret ſome difficult Text, and to ſubmit very unconcernedly to their Explication; and then we ſhall be cenſed infallibly to *obſerve* and *follow* our *Guide*.

If the *Cenſurer* be a *Supralapſarian*; why, then you are not to *reaſon*, your *Eyes* are only to read *Scripture* in the *Supralapſarian* way: And, if monſtrous Abſurdities ſeem to fly in your Face, you have nothing to do, but to cry like him, *O the depth!* &c.

Thus he ſaith, in the firſt Line of his 9*th* Page; *That the determinate Object of Faith, is not what Reaſon can pick out.* No, no; whether you can pick it out or no, you muſt believe as he doth. To allow Men any other *judgment* of Diſcretion (as he learnedly ſhews in the 8*th* Page) is the *Remarker*'s Crime; *Who, by the looſe Latitude he leaves to every Man to determine,* (1.) *what is credible, and* (2.) *what are the evident Motives of Credibility, ſeemingly deſigns to leave every one at diſcretion to believe nothing but what he pleaſes.*

Alas! the *Remarker* (*not knowing what manner of Spirit he is of*) is of the Opinion of thoſe, who believe, *That Religion ought to be free*; And that every Man, as he ſhall anſwer it to Almighty God, is ſincerely to endeavour to judg the beſt he can for himſelf.

But, what the *Cenſurer* means to do for his part, he ſhews you in the 19*th* Line of his 16*th* Page; he will *renounce his own Wiſdom*! he will not take any heed to what his *Reaſon* ſaith: To mind it, in his Opinion, would be to *diſtruſt Scripture*, or to *diſpute* with the Word of God. Avaunt thee then thou *naughty Faculty*, that *cameſt from above!*

God-a-mercy, Sir; thou wilt not, it ſeems, *cum ratione inſanire.* This is home, indeed; and 'tis honeſtly done to declare, you do not mean to hearken to *Reaſon*: Therefore now, if you never ſo wreſt the Holy *Scripture*; remember, the fault muſt not be imputed to your *Reaſon.*

But indeed you will be to blame, if you father your *Conceits* upon the *Scripture* it ſelf, and ſay that your *Faith is an Aſſent to what God has revealed*, as you do in the middle of your 8*th* Page. That is a good Definition of the true *Faith* of thoſe who enjoy the Advantage of *Revelation*, to make a *reaſonable* uſe of it. That of the *Remarker's*,

marker's, is the Definition of *Faith in general:* And if you please to look, you will find it also to be that of Bp *Pearson's*, in his *Exposition upon the Creed.*

But some Men perhaps would define their *Faith* to be *an Assent of the Mind to something that is incredible, upon undeniable evidences of Incredibility.* Truly those that will needs renounce their own *Reason*, cannot define their *Faith* otherwise. And as for the *Censurer*, * he professeth that *Reason* belongs only to *Infidels*, and is their *invincible Argument to attack the Holy Scripture by.* He is therefore very severe with the *Remarker*, for thinking it necessary to interpret *Scripture* in a *reasonable* sense; and he says, † that *that doth the business of Infidels as well*, as professedly *attacking* the *Revelation.*

* *Censure.* P. 22.

† *Censures* p. 23.

The Quarrel is, that the *Remarker* interprets 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. to import, ‖ *That we must, indispensibly, cast down rash and inconsiderate Imaginations, and every high thing* (*Passion or Prejudice*) *that exalteth it self against Reason, and bring into Captivity every Thought to the Rule and Obedience of Reason; and then we shall truly obey God and Christ.*

‖ *Remarks* p. 5. Col. 1.

Why, (Mr. *Censurer!*) must we then understand that Place to imply; *That we must not cast down rash and inconsiderate Imaginations*, &c! Is there no other way, in order to *obey God and Christ*, but to *keep our Passions and Prejudices?* Doth *Reason* indeed *observe and follow Scripture*, when we are most *unreasonable?*

Truly that is just such another Exposition as your former, of *Job* 28. 13. And if that be, in your sense, to defend Holy *Scripture*, I will grant 'tis much better to *attack* it as the *Remarker* doth; if what he doth, must needs be thus termed in the New Dictionary of such Expositions.

But we are not to wonder at this Interpretation of the *Censurer's*. If he talks constantly at this rate, he's pretty consistent with himself: But let him not think we'll allow him now any one soft Word in favour of *Reason.*

Reason is so angry at him, for preferring *Passion* and *Prejudice* before *Wisdom*, that *Understanding* will have no further concerns with such a Man.

And indeed, what would you say to *Reason?* Or what would you do with *Human Understanding? Human Wisdom* cannot help ye. * *It is not true Wisdom.* You have said, That it is not *secure from deception and erring, nor qualify'd to be a sure and safe Guide in Matters of Religion.*

* *Censure.* P. 2.

Thus (Mr. *Censurer*) you may see the superlative *Unreasonableness*, *Mischief*, and *Danger* of your System.

'Tis superlatively Unreasonable. It is really the *dishonour of Human Nature*, that *Men* should assert *contradictory* Propositions: But 'tis the height of *Folly*, that Men should go about to *reason* themselves out of *Reason.*

One would think it strange, that the *Roman Catholicks* should take the trouble to fill three or four large Volumes *in Folio* full of Arguments, addrest to us *Hereticks*, with an earnest invitation to digest the bulky Mass; and, at the same time, should tell us that the best *Arguments* in the World are not fit to produce a saving *Faith*, or to warrant our *Belief.* Which is the same as if they told us, *Believe Arguments, which none but Fools will believe.*

However, this is pretty consistent with the *Roman Catholick* System. They allow of pious Frauds; yet in the Controversy touching *Human Wisdom*, they do not mince the matter; they do not *say*, and *unsay*: They utterly bid defiance to't, and profess they'll have nothing to do with *Reason.*

But some who call themselves *Protestants*, and give *Reason its intire due*; with what Agility can they thus turn about, and think to persuade others to do so?

When you talk the most against *Reason*; If your *Arguments* be good, then *Reason* may be *trusted*, and it will *guide* us well, if it *lead* us to your *Opinion*; and therefore what you *declaim* against its *Ability*, is evidently *false.*

Or,

Or, if it were true, that *Reason* is not to be *trusted*, then your *reasoning* is *insignificant*; you cannot, in *reason* or modesty, expect your *Arguments* should take; for then we are not *sure* we can *understand* or *know* any thing, we are utterly left in *uncertainty*. Your System therefore is not only *unreasonable*;

It is also infinitely Mischievous. There is no necessity to repeat what has been said of the *scandal* it gives to *Papists*, and others; to which Objection, you'll never be able to answer any thing that's *reasonable*. But I'd wish you to consider, what Injury it offers also to *Christianity* in general.

How will you persuade *Men* to imbrace the *Gospel*, if you represent it as an Enemy to *Reason*, or a Doctrine that fears *Reason*'s Scrutiny?

And upon your Principles, how will you argue with the *Jews* in particular? Offer them any Text out of the *Law* or *Prophets*; they'll forbid you then certainly all *reasoning*; they'll bring you moreover some Sentences out of the Inspired Writers, expresly calling their *Law* an *Everlasting Covenant*; and their *Statutes*, *Statutes and Ordinances for ever*: They'll tell you again, you are not to *reason*, but to *believe*; and they'd *make* you believe if they *could*. In fine,

Your System, which so basely abuseth Reason, and renders it of no use, cannot but be extreamly dangerous to the Salvation of those that maintain it, and of those that suffer themselves to be deluded into it.

Its *Mischievousness* and *Unreasonableness* are *obvious*. The *persisting* in such an *Error*, cannot therefore be *honest*, nor consequently *safe*.

Disannulling the use of *Reason* effectually takes away the Intelligence of *Holy Scripture*. Now, is not that *dangerous*?

What work should be made of *Scripture*, if by the Effort and Rules of *Reason* we were not to study to understand its obscure Passages! if it was interpreted and applied *contrary to Reason*; as the Texts, *Job* 28.13. 2 *Cor.* 10. 5, *&c.* are misapplied and misunderstood by the Champion of the *inconsistent* System?

The attributing to *Religion* the degradation of *Reason*, makes *Religion* appear *unreasonable*, and fearfully *ugly*; which is enough to scare Men from her, and *defeat* the good Design of *Religion*. Is there no *danger* in this? And doth not this make it necessary we should gently take off the *Fool's Cap*, some Men have had the insolence to place on *Religion*'s Head, and from thence should put it in its Place?

Truly the blaspheming of the Faculty of *Reason*, with which God has indued our Souls, is an horrible *Ingratitude* towards Almighty God, a base *Contempt* of so precious a Gift, and in some degree a *Sin*; like that of the *Papists* who revile the *Holy Scripture*, call it a *Nose of Wax*, and a *leaden Rule*, and as far as in them lieth render it *useless*.

Men shall be as well *accountable* at the Day of Judgment, whether they have seriously hearkned to *Reason*, and sincerely considered its *Rules*; as, whether they have attentively studied *Scripture*, and endeavoured to the best of their Power in their Circumstances to understand it.

You can then in no wise (Mr. *Censurer!*) vindicate your System from *endangering* the *Salvation* of Men, nor consequently from fighting against God, or doing *the Work of the Devil*, and furthering the Interest of the *Kingdom of Darkness*.

It will be a mighty Glory you shall thereby reap; And, no doubt, when you come into the other World, some *Angels* will be very earnest that you may have your *Reward*.

It cannot but be observed, you have it already in some measure; Seeing that when you knew *Reason*, and its *intire due*, you have not walked by that *Rule*, nor been *thankful* to God for your *Understanding*, but have *darkned your Heart*; therefore you have been *given up* to what is exceedingly *unreasonable*, basely to *calumniate*, and to break the Rules of *Charity*.

Do you not * represent the *Remarker*, as wilfully waving all occasions of mentioning the *Holy Scripture*; when you cannot mention particularly any one place in the *Remarks*, where the Thred of the Discourse required

* *Censure.* P. 5, 19.

required that the *Remarker* ſhould treat of *Scripture*, and he avoided it?

The *Remarker* confirms his Aſſertions by, and explains ſeveral Texts of *Scripture*, as that of 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. 2 *Pet.* 1. 20. 1 *Cor.* 10. 15. 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 21. *Prov.* 20. 27. in a ſhort Paper of one ſingle Sheet and half, treating of a Subject principally Philoſophical, which the Scripture leaves in a great meaſure to our own *conſideration*, becauſe *Revelation* ſuppoſes us to be *Men*, and naturally 'tis ſufficiently manifeſt that *Men* have *Reaſon*, and if there be need 'tis well enough proved by *reaſoning*, as the *Poſſibility of Motion* was by the Philoſopher's *walking* about the Room: And you have the Conſcience to ſay, that the *Remarker* never ſpeaks of the *Holy Scripture*.

At the 5*th* Page, in the firſt and ſecond Columns, the *Remarker* proves, that if we truly follow *Reaſon*, it will certainly lead us to the true Senſe of *Revelation*, and to the true Obedience of God and Chriſt; that by the Text 2 *Pet.* 1. 20. we muſt underſtand, that all the Books of *Holy Scripture* were given, not by the Prophet's own *Imagination*, but by the *Inſpiration* of God, and that they were dictated by the *Holy Ghoſt*. Likewiſe in both Columns of the following Page, he evinceth that the *Rational* Syſtem is the only way to win the *Socinians* and *Deiſts* to the *Truth*, and to the *Orthodox* Doctrines: And you think it no *Calumny* to ſay, as you do in your 9*th* and 10*th* Pages, that he never vouchſafes to name either Prophets or Apoſtles, or our Lord Jeſus himſelf; that he leaves us to apprehend, that he believes our Lord not to have been above a Man, and that he intends to bring all Pretenders to Inſpiration upon a level.

Thus thoſe do act, who believe not that there is ever like to be a *Reckoning*; and thus they *ſlander* that know not, neither will know that Men ſhall be accountable for every uncharitable *word*.

That's evidently a *malicious Calumny*, in the three laſt Lines of your 12*th* Page, and in the 10*th* and 11*th* Lines of the 13*th* Page, where you intimate, that the *Remarker* is not for taking the *Holy Scripture* for his *Guide*; when he expreſly profeſſeth that the *Holy Scripture* is the *Word of God*, and that it was *dictated by the Holy Ghoſt*, and conſequently contains *the Will of God*: And when the ſame *Remarker* likewiſe expreſly aſſerts, that it is a *Rule of Reaſon*, *That we ſhould make the beſt uſe we can of the Means of Information*; which, indeed, *compriſeth* all the *Rules*.

I wonder then, Sir, who has the *Malice* of clothing Men in *Bear-ſkins*, which you mention in the firſt Period of your Libel; You, or other People?

The *Remarker* objects nothing to Mr. *Y.* but that he ſometimes forgets himſelf in his Diſcourſes, pulling down what he had eſtabliſhed. But that is all along imputed to Overſight and Miſtake.

Whether or no that be true, which is thus imputed to Mr. *Y.* 'tis certain, *Humanum eſt errare*: Innocent Error is no high Crime. There is no Man but may be guilty of it, and mend. But ſome Sins are very difficult to be repented of, becauſe that is not true *Penitence*, which cauſeth not the making *amends* for Injuries. And ſome Errors are ſo deſtructive of Piety and Virtue, that 'tis ſcarce poſſible to make *Satisfaction* for them when obſtinately maintain'd, and when there is pravity and wilfulneſs in the caſe.

As for what you intimate in the firſt Line of your 19*th* Page, that Mr. *Y. ſhould be ſtoned* if he were of an erroneous Religion; that may be your Opinion, but appears not to be the *Remarker's* Doctrine.

Thoſe that are for *Reaſon* and the *Rules of Reaſon*, cannot but be *kind* and *good*, if they follow their Principles, for it is highly *reaſonable* to be ſo.

But they that make War againſt *Reaſon*, have diveſted themſelves of their *Humanity*, and are therefore capable of all manner of *Brutality* and *Barbarity*.

Hence it is that the *Roman Catholicks* are the cruelleſt of all Men. When I read of their Maſſacring of Infants, of their drinking in the Skulls of thoſe they have juſt murdered; of their Rage toward thoſe who are going to die, whom the moſt ſalvage

People

People are used to compassionate; of their dashing out, in fury, the Brains of them that wait for the Executioner, as they did to *Taylor* the Curate of *Hadley*, because he pray'd in the Vulgar Tongue: I reflect, that this is the effect of *Mens renouncing their Reason.* This it is, think I then, to be governed by rash *Inconsideration* and *Prejudice.*

But perhaps you would not kill outright, or all at once: You'd only *stone* Folk as they passed the Street, or you'd imprison or starve them. *Ah! Good People*, as said poor *Hooper*, when he had been burning three quarters of an hour, and his Limbs dropt off into the Fire, but the Flames had not been fierce enough to smother him, (or rather more truly it might have been said, Wicked People) *a little more Fire, for God's sake!*

Howbeit, Sir, if you be for either way of Burning; by what I am informed of the state of the Matter, you may be sometime without Imployment except you will burn the *Orthodox:* For they say, that since the *Tritheistick* Notion has been condemned by the *Church*, the sticklers for *Heresy* are become firm *Trinitarians.* And some Papers that were written to prevent a *Schism*, have been effectual, as in particular, that intituled, * *The Scripturalists Christian Condescension:* Tho, it seems, if you had the management of that Affair, the *Reformation* would soon crumble into endless *Divisions*; and 'twould not be enough to *believe* the *Holy Scripture*, and *live* according to that *Belief*, but Men should be obliged to submit their *Reason* to those who pretend to none, or else *divide.* For certain, the *Ariani molles* had never lived in your *Communion.*

* *Single Sheet sold at Mrs.* Baldwin's *in* Warwick-lane.

FINIS.

Pamphlets, and single Sheets, sold at Mrs. Baldwins *in* Warwicklane.

AN Essay concerning Adepts.
The Sophick Constitution.
The Adepts Case.
The Reasons which may induce Adepts to do something for the World.
An Account of the late Papers concerning Adepts.

The Gospel-Terms of Communion.
The Scripturalists Christian Condescension.
The Everlasting Gospel.